William 3rd War against France circ 1690

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The Copy of a Letter from a Gentleman in Dort to a Member of the House of Commons in London.

Tranſlated out of *Dutch*.

SIR,

I Am got ſafe to *Dort* after rough Paſſage, and have taken the firſt Opportunity, after the compoſure of my Spirits, and a little converſe with my intelligent Friends, to return you the moſt impartial Account I can to thoſe Enquiries you gave me in Charge at my departure; wiſhing they may be as much to your Satisfaction, as the moſt obliging Treatment I received from you, and your other generous Friends in *London*, and your later Correſpondences challenge from me.

At this time I ſhall endeavor to reſolve Three of your Enquiries, as thoſe which more immediately concern you as a Member of Parliament, leaving the Remainder to a farther Opportunity. The firſt, as I remember, was to know what the Succeſſes of the *French* King's Arms have been this Campaign. Secondly, what I have obſerved of the ſtate of both our Countries in relation to the preſent War. And laſtly, what Meaſures are taken by the Confederate Princes towards a Peace, or Preparation for a more vigorous War.

As to the firſt, it is true the intemperate Spring, and thereby the late opening of the Campaign, on the part of the *French*, and eſpecially that King's ſurprizing return to *Verſailles*, and his detaching from hence ſo great a part of his Troops to the *Rhine*, put us in great hopes that we ſhould have been able to have at leaſt made a good Defence this Summer; yea, our States expected ſome conſiderable Victory, and the regaining ſome Frontier Town from the *French*. But we have had a fatal Diſappointment; our Statholder had very commodiouſly encamped himſelf at *Park*, where he could want no ſort of Supplies; we had with great diligence fortified *Huy*, a Place of the greateſt importance, conſidering it was the only Place of ſtrength upon the *Maize*, betwixt *Namure* and *Liege*, yet it was loſt without our being able to make any Advances towards its relief, when our Army was in its fulleſt

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leſt Vigor and Heart; ſo that now *Liege*, and all that fertile Country, and all the Circuit to *Bois le Duc*, lies open to the *French* for Forrage and Contribution, out of which they infinitely ſtore their Magazines of Proviſions for the next Campaign: We aſcribe it to want of Courage, or Conduct, that we attaqued not the Duke of *Luxemburgh* while he was poſting himſelf to cover that Siege.

But we have much more reaſon to exclaim againſt the Conduct of detaching the Duke of *Wirtenburgh* to make ſo inſignificant a forcing of the Lines, and ſending ſuch a part of our Army to *Liege*, at a time when the only excuſe we make for the Loſs at *Landen* was the *French* overpowering us in Numbers.

But ſurely all wiſe Men will conſider, That as our Army was intrenched, and our Artillery planted, we had the Advantage of Three to One, the French having no Coverture, but were to ſtorm a Fortified Camp with at leaſt 40, or as they own 45000 Souldiers in it; an Attempt and Succeſs ſcarce to be paralled in Hiſtory; in which Action the World muſt own it ſelf convinced that the *French* conquer by Courage, Manhood and Valour, and not by Treachery or Surprize, or inequality of Forces: And if our Loſſes muſt be aſcribed to the *French* outnumbering of the Confederates in all Places, when muſt we expect better Succeſs? For to what Number ſoever we may vainly hope to encreaſe our Troops, he is able to augment his proportionably; ſo that let us ſwell to what degree ſoever our windy Imagination may ſtretch us, we ſhall be but like the Frog to the Oxe in the Fable.

But it muſt nauſeate all thinking Men to conſider, what pitiful Excuſes both your and our Prints make to cover the Loſs we ſuſtained at *Nere Winden*: They tell us, That the French were ſlain in whole Brigades by the advantagious diſpoſal of our Cannon, and the ſmall damage we ſuſtained by theirs, our Infantry being commanded to lie upon their Bellies while their Cannon played; and that in fine they loſt above 20000 Men killed, or mortally wounded; yea, ſome advance the Loſs to be double to ours, and when by Authority they publiſh theſe things, to buoy up the Spirits of the People, they with deſign to have made us hope for ſome after Succeſs told us, That when the Detachments to *Liege*, and with the Duke of *Wirtenburgh* were rejoyned, the Army would be ſtronger than before the Battle. From which we may learn the truth of the old Proverb, That Lyars ought to have good Memories; for it is well known that thoſe Detachments amounted

mounted to 27000 Men, as the Remarks upon the *London Gazette* plainly proves.

Therefore it is a plain though involuntary Confeſſion, that we loſt ſo many, and we aſcribe all this Loſs to our Statholder's Obſtinacy, which with you is called his great Courage; that he would not hearken to the Councel of withdrawing his Army over the River *Geete* in the night: whereby all thoſe Mens Lives might have been preſerved for future Events, as his was by a timely Retreat to ſecure his own Perſon; which Conduct Marſhal *Luxemburgh* moderately cenſured, by ſaying he now found Prince *Waldeck* was dead. Another convincing Argument of our Loſs, as great as I have mentioned, is eaſily gathered from the Reſolution of our States to raiſe 25000 Men more, which I believe they would willingly enough do, to recruit the Loſſes of the laſt Campaign; and yet no ways increaſe their Numbers; but without they be ſupply'd from you with Monv, I know our Paper Treaſury is ſo low, that we are no ways able to accompliſh our Deſigns. I own the *German* Princes and *Switzerland* might ſupply us, but we muſt pay at leaſt 20 Dollars a Head, and they muſt be punctually paid while in Service, or we can get no Men; for the Princes of *Germany* raiſe no Forces but what they ſell, as a great Branch of their Revenues, and the Arbitrament of War and Peace depends upon the Gelt, which made our Statholder and States to buy off the King of *Denmark* from the Siege of *Ratisburg*, with 100000*l.* in hand, and as much more promiſed to be paid after. But we that know the uſage of this State know, That that King may ſtay long enough for the latter Payment, now that the Storm is over.

But while I am mentioning thoſe Recruits, you are to conſider what raw undiſciplined Men they will be, more fit to make Faſcines with, than to conquer the well diſciplined Army of the *French*, fluſhed with ſo many Victories.

However the hopes of our State is, that the Rumor of ſuch a Vote of raiſing Supplies will obtain from you proportionable Recruits, if you be either able or willing to ſend more of your fellow-Subjects to the Common Shambles.

But to proceed, it was rational to think that after ſuch a ſucceſs *Luxemburgh* would attempt either *Liege* or *Charleroy*; and if our Army had been in ſo good a condition as our and your *Gazettes* would have perſwaded the World, we had opportunity enough to have poſted our

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ſelves ſo, as to have prevented the Siege ; while the general Diſcourſe even at our Statholder's Table was, as ſeveral Officers aſſure me, that the *French* Army was ſo ſo haraſs'd, and weakened by the ſlaughter of their Men at *Nere Winden*, and 8000 of their wounded Men couped up in Hoſpitals that they were able to do no more this Campaign.

But to the eternal Shame of our Statholder as *Generaliſſimo*, we have ſuffered *Charleroy* to be taken without once eſſaying a Relief, for we want the Skill or Manhood to attacque an Enemy in their Trenches. But it may be you know not what an Excuſe we make for ſuch a neglect, for the States had ſent a new Train of Artillery to ſupply the Loſs at *Landen*, as fair Braſs Cannon as any was to be ſeen ; but it ſeems, being ſo credulous that the Statholder had ſaved his Wagons and draught-Horſes by his giving out he had ſent them away with his Baggage before the late Battel, they ſent no ſupply of them ; ſo that too late it was owned how great a part of thoſe were loſt. So that now we have no manner of Excuſe why we relieved not *Charleroy*, but that we wanted Wagons and draught-Horſes to furniſh a marching Army with a ſufficient Train, and Proviſions for a few days ; and ſo were forced to ſtand in our Camp with our Arms acroſs for 20 days, till we had notice of the Surrender of it. So that now as *Huy* opened a free Paſſage to *Liege* ; ſo this to *Bruſſels* and the remainder of *Brabant*, even to our Faſtneſſes of the united Provinces ; and it is not forgot among us how 20 years ſince in one Spring this ſo victorious King took 60 of our ſtrongeſt Towns and Forts in one Month, when he had neither *Huy Namur*, or *Mons*, and advanced within a few Leagues of *Amſterdam* : So that we have great reaſon to be apprehenſive of our eminent Danger the next Spring, if no Peace be made this Winter ; when we are expoſed ſo naked of any Barrier in the *Spaniſh Netherlands*, and conſider how untenable the ſtrongeſt places have hitherto been againſt the force of his Aſſaults, when to conceal or cover our Impotence, we aſcribe the Succeſſes to Treachery. Thus I have given you a ſhort touch of this King's Succeſſes in our Parts.

I paſs now to the *Rhine* ; where 'tis notoriouſly known, how vaſt a Magazine of Arms, Ammunition, and all ſorts of Stores were taken at *Heidelberg*, and though Prince *Lewis* of *Baden* had ſo ſtrongly intrenched himſelf, that the *Dauphin* and *Marſhal de Lorge* thought it not adviſable to attacque him, yet the *French* have had the honour to have

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couped him up all this Summer, and the Advantage to have maintained their whole Army in an Enemies Country, and raiſed immenſe Contributions, which, by reaſon of the Hoſtages they have in Cuſtody, muſt be paid, even when their Army are withdrawn into their Winter-Quarters.

Of how great importance the taking of *Roſes* in *Catalonia* is, may be ſeen even in the Monthly Account, which induſtriouſly leſſens all Succeſſes of the *French*; it is not only a Port Town and Harbor towards the *Mediterranean*, but hath a very great Trade into *Catalonia*: So as it is a Key both to Trade inward and outward; and gives not only an Harbor to *French* Merchants, and Galleys, but extends likewiſe its Juriſdiction to a large part of *Catalonia*, where it ſeems the *Spaniards* are ſo weak, that his Forces have not been able to take any Advantage over the Duke of *Noalles*, although he detached ſome part of his Forces to Marſhal *Catinat*.

This leads me to give you a ſhort Account of that wiſe and fortunate General Marſhal *Catinat*'s Succeſſes, who, after he had quietly ſuſtained all the contemptible things from all the Confederates *Gazetters*, as if he were neither able to Succor *Pignerol*, or Relieve *Cazal*; at laſt, like another *Fabius Maximus*, deſcended from the cloudy Hills into the open Plains, and by fine Force obtained as compleat a Victory over the unfortunate and obſtinate Duke of *Savoy* as any hath been obtained in this War. Since which he marcheth as Conqueror where he pleaſeth through the Country, conſtraining that Duke's Subjects to furniſh him with all ſorts of Proviſions, and moſt large Contributions; and the *French* King reſolving to puſh the War, on that ſide, either to a Peace upon his own Conditions, or an entire Conqueſt of the Country, hath ordered an addition of 50000 Men to the Marſhals Army, which will much facilitate the Conqueſt of that Country, or force a Peace.

As I have given you this Account of the Succeſſes of the *French* King's Arms, ſo you cannot but with me obſerve the unproſperous Proceedings of the Emperour's Troops this year in *Hungary*, where the wily Grand *Viſier*, as much contemned as *Catinat* was, ſuffered the Duke *de Croy* to lay Siege to *Belgrade*, the Reduction of which in one Month our *Gazettes* aſſured us off: But after the Duke had loſt by Aſſaults, Sickneſs and Death, in his march almoſt as many Thouſands of his Men as he had been Days before it (for ſome Prints compute them at

15000 Men) the *Viſier* made a ſhort turn upon him, and made him ingloriouſly quit the Siege. For excuſe of which no other than the common one is made, That the Enemy out-numbered ours, who by the Prints was, from 10000 Men a few days before were multiplied to 50000. at the raiſing the Siege.

You may, if you pleaſe, add to theſe the Conſideration, That ſince this preſent War the Confederates have neither gained one Town or Fort from the *French*, or preſerved any one, which his Troops attaqued (except *Rhinefield*) nor been able, though that King is ſurrounded on every ſide with an entire Circle of Enemies, to hinder him from enlarging his Conqueſts on every ſide; and is ſo provident that every year he hath ſufficient Magazines before-hand of all things neceſſary for one or two years ſucceeding, and all his Money for two or three years ordered in readineſs; and this year can increaſe his new Levies proportionable to what ever he finds the Confederates are able to do. This I ſuppoſe is ſufficient to Anſwer the firſt of your Enquiries.

As to the ſecond Head, it may be branched into ſeveral Particulars, as relating both to you and us; which I will not perſue in an exact Method, but as Matters of Enquiry hath occurred to my mind ſince I was with you, or the later Letters of you, or your Friends, have ſuggeſted to my thoughts.

And firſt, as to the propenſity of our Country to embrace a Peace with *France*; you may remember that in our Town, which hath the firſt Vote, the P. of O. was firſt made Statholder, though all the States and Magiſtrates of the Seven Provinces had taken Solemn Oaths never to admit a Statholder, and particularly not the P. of O. nor any of his Houſe; and the Prince himſelf had taken an Oath not to accept of the Office though tendered to him: So that the breach of all their Oaths upon that Election was by ſome ſtyled abſolute Perjury, but we found a ſofter Word for it, in ſtyling it, the mortifying the former Edict. You know how our Senior Burger-maſter *Cornelius de Witt*, and his Brother the Pentitioner, were moſt barbarouſly Murthered, becauſe they did not ſo readily comply. Now in this very Town the Senior Burger-maſter *Halewin*, as you know by his Sentence printed with you, was ſettling ſome Correſpondence with Monſieur *Amelet*, in order to know what terms the *French* King would inſiſt upon; and I aſſure you this was not a perſonal Caprice of his, who is a ſolid, judi-

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tious Perſon, and of a great Intereſt and Popular ; who acted nothing in that but with the good Liking and underhand Approbation of many other great Men and Magiſtrates, which you may eaſily perceive by the boldneſs of his Expreſſions, as you have it printed in your Tranſlation of his Sentence in theſe Word ; *viz.* Pag. 12. *That it is agreed on all hands, that to endeavour to procure a Peace is not at all prejudicial to the State, but is ſo far from that, that thoſe that imploy themſelves about ſome honeſt way of obtaining it, ſhould not be looked on as Criminals, but rather to have a Statue erected them, and that he was willing to do it with the peril of his Life.*

Alſo in the 13. Pag. it is ſaid, *That being before the high Court of Juſtice of his Country, he had a great mind to convince them, that it was none of his Fault that Lives and Eſtates was Sacrificed to Men, and that he would rather dye than that it ſhould be longer continued, and to play on Dobb, Dobb, Dobb, Fanfare for the King of* England; by whom he means not King *James* but our Statholder, for whoſe ſake he neither would have Lives or Eſtates Sacrified nor War continued. And in the next Pag. it is added further, *That in caſe ſome ſolid and reaſonable Propoſals of Peace ſhould be offered, it being a thing ſo neceſſary, and ſalutary for the State ; that every true Patriot would readily, and without any other reaſon, have embraced them : withal aſſuring the Judges that what ſteps ever he had made in this affair, they were occaſioned by nothing elſe but a ſincere intention to promote the true intereſt of this State.*

I aſſure you he ſpoke theſe things with great boldneſs, and wanted not the majority of the Suffrages of many Magiſtrates of Cities, if not thoſe of the Judges themſelves ; and if the Princes Authority had been as great now, as when he was firſt made Statholder, he had been *de Witted* rather than had ſo eaſy a Sentence. I verily believe that I perfectly know many Scores of our chieſeſt Magiſtrates, who are of the ſame Opinion with Monſieur *Halewin* ; and by the Converſation I had with very many of your Parliament Men, I think there are a majority of you, who, if they might give their Vote by Balloting, would put an end to the War, by returning to the Condition our Countries were in before the War ; and if they would conſider their Strength, as well as Intereſt, they would value the Saving of their Country from ruin, before the private concern of any Prince whatſoever. And to me it is an unaccountable thing to find leading Gentlemen in Governments, both at home and abroad, ſo forward and outragiouſly zealous to

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Supplant and Abdicate their lawful Kings, Supream Governors or Magiſtrates upon ſmall Pretences; who yet can ſee their Country fleeced, yea, gnawed to the Bones, with Taxes to ſupport ſuch, as have either been Sovereigns of their own Creation, or Uſurpers; as I have known ſome Servants who were audatious and refractory to their Maſters, and yet were ſlaviſhly Cowards and abjectedly ſuffered the Affronts and Inſolencies of their fellow Servants. I am ſure this is an odious Diſpoſition in Magiſtrates or Repreſentatives of the People, as you are ſtiled.

But to return to the head of this your Second Enquiry; I can aſſure you we are ſo ſolicitous for our own Preſervation, and ſuſpicious of our Statholder, that when ever we ſhall ſurmiſe that he ſhall prefer the Preſervation of any Intereſt before ours, we ſhall with great precipitation entertain any reaſonable Propoſals from *France*, and though Monſieur *Halewin* ſays, That unleſs *France* would deliver up to the *Spaniſh Netherlands* ſome conſiderable place, there is no Dutchman who would not rather Sacrifice the laſt Stiver he had then think of a Peace; yet I am well ſatisfied if we might have *Maſtricht* in our own right, as it now properly belongs to the *Spaniards*, they would that moment quit the Intereſt, not only of the Statholder but of all our Confederates, and leave them all in the lurch, as you know we have conſtantly done in all the ſeperate Treaties we have had, and are well known, even to a Scandal upon us, in thoſe of 48 and 74. And I muſt here note to you, we are in no condition to continue the War, for though Monſieur *Halewin*, in his Diſcourſe to Monſieur *Amelet*, ſaith, That it was true that the moſt conſiderable Families of our Country ſuffered very much by heavy Taxes, as having great Eſtates in Land which carry the greateſt burthen, yet the Merchants were gently treated for the benefit of Trade, yet he owns that thoſe Arguments he uſed, in Page the Third and Fourth, were only to magnify the Power of the States; being deſirous, like a Lover of his Country, to let the *French* know the utmoſt of our Abilities that we might obtain better Terms; but the *French* King knows too well our inſufficiency to carry on the War, for the Taxes are here ſo heavy that I know ſeveral ſubſtantial Citizens, in our City of *Dort*, who pay as much for Taxes as the yearly Rent of their Houſes yield them.

And though Monſieur *Halewin* ſaith, That the Taxes on real Eſtates could cauſe at the worſt but a change of Maſters, which did not at all

all concern the States in general and in abſtracto; yet ſurely the impoveriſhing of the landed Men to that degree, That they muſt be forced to ſell their Eſtates for nothing, to others that were able to pay the Taxes, muſt in a little time effect the States in general; who can't ſubſiſt without the ſupply of the *Terra firma*, no more than the Heart, Brain, or Arms and Legs, without ſupply from the Stomach; for, however it is unregarded, all other Taxes, upon what ſort of Commodities ſoever, either of Ware or Tare, in the laſt reſort, fall upon the Land and its Occupiers; and to let you ſee how our States, not only at this preſent ſqueeze the People, but oppreſs them to the higheſt degree, there was a Gentleman who had as fertil a Plat of Ground as any in the Country, which being judged Commodious to build a Fort upon, the States offered a Sum of Mony for it, but the Owner being unwilling to part with his Inheritance, they laid heavier Impoſitions upon it, till the Taxes amounted very near the yearly profit he made of the Land, ſo that at laſt he was forced to part with it; yet, as Monſieur *Halewin* ſaith, the States were no Looſers, for he was Taxed according to the old rate; it being alledged he had received Mony for it, which was to be Taxed: I remember I heard, when with you, that this *Story* was related at an Entertainment, when ſome made complaint of the heavineſs of your Taxes; it was replied, Then, and not till then, *England* would have reaſon to complain, when you were driven to ſuch Extremities: you know how great a Man he was that related this, and Major *Aſhton* can name him if he pleaſes.

Monſieur *Halewin*, pag. 3, in his Communication with Monſieur *Amelot*, to aggrandire our power, told him, Though there were ſome loſſes of Trade on one hand, yet they were repaid on the other by a conſiderable Sale of the Manufactures, and thoſe that ſtood in need of the Goods were to pay a greater price; and that the Merchants generally enſured: But I muſt tell you this was ſaid, to put our beſt foot forward, for though our Merchants, of whom our very States conſiſt, deviſe all the ways they can to promote or preſerve Traffick, yet our common People, what by the burthen of Taxes, and the Obſtruction of the old courſe of Trade, are reduced to ſuch a poor Eſtate that they are upon the very Tipto of riſing in mutiny againſt our Magiſtrates and States, for their ſo obſtinate perſiſting in the War; and generally exclaim that our Statholder never yet had any ſucceſs ar all againſt the French, ſo that if this Winter, or in the Spring, the French King ſhould

have any one ſignal Succeſs in theſe parts, it would be impoſſible to reſtrain the Mobile any longer.

Indeed our Merchants have many Contrivances you want, becauſe our States being all ſuch, contrive or connive at the Frauds; for whereas we read weekly in your *Gazetts* of French Prizes, taken by ſome of our Privateers, they are generally ſuch as by Aſſignation are to be brought to our Ports, and by theſe meaſures we ſupply you and other Countries with French Commodities, beſides we are glad to be excuſed with ſo ſmall a quota of our Men of War, while you make a great noiſe with encreaſing the number of your grand Fleet, by which means we ſpare more for Convoys; and it is an admiration to our People, that you ſhould not diſcover our Arts and Induſtry to ingroſs all the Trade into our hands. We have, without your being able to cenſure us for it, utterly defeated all your Laws of Navigation: we bring you in our own Bottoms, at leaſt under ſome of your own Peoples names, the far greateſt part of all your imported Commodities, which may be diſcovered every day, by the number of our Dutch built Veſſels in your River, and all your Ports: We have had good Lading back of Corn, Butter, and Cheeſe, and there is one Fraught we bring of our Country-men, French Refuges, and other Foreigners, for what uſes your Maſter and ours deſigns them, it becomes you to look to it; we have got one advantage ſince your Revolution beſides many other colateral ones, that we know the ſoundings of all your Ports, the ſtrength of your Fortifications, the Stores of your Arms and Amunition you had, which have been Tranſported hither or to *Flanders*, the ſmall Stock you have left, the Secrets of your Revenue, and what is above all the diſpoſition of your People, and the eaſineſs of managing your Parliaments to our advantage, whereby we and the Confederates have gained many Millions, ſince we found you ſo ready to give us 600000 *l.* for our aſſiſting our own Statholder, for which benefits we have reaped ſince in any other Reign we would have given Millions.

Yet notwithſtanding all theſe Emoluments, if you once withdraw your giving hands, we ſhall be forced to make Peace; and when you have given to the laſt Doit, and are ſufficiently exhauſted, we ſhall be able to make our Terms, and then enjoy the ſole Trade, for obtaining which only, we uſe all our Arts to engage you ſtill in the War, from which we expect no other advantage. And our Statholders

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intereſt will never fail within our conſideration, for that he uſeth his deſpotick Power in nominating or approving only ſuch Magiſtrates as are his Creatures, which hath highly diſobliged this Town, *Roterdam*, *Pregow*, and many others of our moſt opulent Cities, and by his preferring to the Supream Command of our Armies, The Dukes of *Halſton Ploen*, and *Wirtenburgh*, General *Ginckle* and others, he hath ſo diſobliged the Prince of *Naſſaw* Statholder of *Frieſland* and other Princes of his own Blood, as well as deſerving Men of our Country, that he hath loſt very much of his intereſt in *Frieſland*, *Groninghen*, and, other Provinces lying moſt obnoxious to the *French*, which is no inconſiderable weakning of our Country; and I doubt not but by our Statholders diſobliging many leading and popular Men in our Country as well as in yours, he muſt have cooled the Affections of many to his Perſon, as well as his advancing ſeveral among us, who are not very greatful to the People: as I remember I heard many wonder with you, that one *Conings by*, who was much blackened by Informations againſt him in Parliament, and yet, as if done it in diſpight to the Houſes, he made him a Lord, and took him into his Secret Council.

This Conſideration leads me to tell you, what Reſentments he uſed of the Conducts of the Admirals this Year, as he had formerly done againſt Admiral *Torrington*, and Admiral *Ruſſel*; which we look upon as a perfect Deſign to convince our States that he hath an heartier good will to promote our Intereſt than yours. I muſt confeſs it was a great overſight in your Council, and Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, that they did not Order the Grand *Fleet* to attend the Merchants under the Care of Admiral *Rook*, till they had certain Notice where the *French Fleet* was; but ſince they had no ſuch Orders, I know not wherein the Admirals are to blame; for I hear that Admiral *Almond* owns that Sir *Ralph Dalaval*, and I think the other two Admirals, at a Council of Flag Officers, moved that the Grand *Fleet* might attend Admiral *Rook* till they knew where the *French Fleet* was; which being utterly denied by our Flags, and ſuch of yours as joyn'd with us, he then moved, that at leaſt they might go a hundred Leagues further; which being likewiſe denied, by reaſon I preſume of the poſitive Orders to attend ſo far only, without any Latitude in their Inſtructions, I cannot ſee why our Statholder ſhould not remove ſome of the Commiſſioners of your Admiralty, if he be ſatisfied there have been no Miſcarriages of the Council. As to the Loſs ſuſtained there, I think we and the Hamburghers

burghers had the greateſt Share ; yet when I conſider the Charge your Merchants had been at, in lying Fraught Nine, Ten, or Twelve Months in expectance of Convoys, the Charge of buoying up the ſunk Ships, and damage to their Goods ; the abſolute Loſs of their Market, the Money which muſt be payed for their Conducting home, and the Expences while they ſtay for a ſtronger Convoy, and the real Loſs you ſuſtained, as appears by the Remarcks on the *London Gazette*, the Merchants muſt have loſt a pretty round Sum. And I learnt, before I came from *London*, that upon the firſt Alarum of that Loſs, many thouſand of Workmen at the Clothworkers Trade had been diſmiſſed ; ſo that in one Pariſh. viz. *Leeds* in *Yorkſhire*, Five hundred Workmen had been diſcharged in one day. And the hazard of Adventuring hath ſo diſcouraged the Merchants to buy, that they are ſtill out of Employment ; and we have the like Effects with us.

However the matter fell out that you ſuffered no more, yet the *French* at that time in Ships, and Goods, got as much (beſides the Burning of ſo many Ships) as will defray the greateſt part of the Charge of their *Fleet* this Summer ; whereas you have been at a vaſt Charge, and yet ſcarcely have preſerved one inward or outward bound Ship, which was diſcovered by a *French* Privateer.

Neither can we apprehend the true reaſon of your late Proclamation concerning your Sea-men, that they ſhall have no pay till their next going to Sea, and then only a promiſe to be paid to *Michaelmas* laſt. The Pay they uſed to have at the laying up of their Ships was a great Support to their Families in Winter, and by ſhort Voyages till the *Fleet* went out, they got ſomething towards the Summer following: I know not how you can think that near 100000 Perſons, including their Wives and Children, can have any poſſibility of ſubſiſting without Stealing, Begging, or Starving, if they be not paid now.

This kind of way of Proceeding our Sea-men would not ſuffer ; and ſuch Proclamations have that fatal Conſequence, beſides the Diſcouragement of the Sea-men (which you may be ſure pleaſeth us here) that it diſcovers either the real want of Money the Governmeet is in, or elſe the Squandering what is given to unwarrantable Uſes. Such as the magnificent Buildings here at the *Loo*, where our Statholder is building a Palace to equal *Verſailles*, or the Pleaſure-houſe of the Duke of *Savoy*; to furniſh which, beſides the Curioſities and ſplendid Ornaments, he hath provided, as an Onyx Table and Stands from the Emperor,

paror, he hath transported the richest Hangings, and other Furniture of the Palaces of your Kings, and several rich Silver Tables and Pictures; and he hath demolished a great part of *Hampton-Court*, and so magnificently rebuilt it, that I was told when I went to see it, that already he had Expended above 100000 *l.* upon it, it would Cost 400000 *l.* more ere finished and furnished, while *Whitehall* lyes still in Rubbish; and one of your Commissioners for taking the Publick Accounts told me, that as much was Expended upon that Building, and at *Kensington*, and for Jewels and other needless Matters, as would have built Fourscore Men of War. And I remember an Extract of their Accounts was shown me, whereby it appeared that since our Statholder's Administration in *England*, he had received into the Exchequer 25 Millions; of which, according to a full discharge of all Money to be defrayed according to the Establishments, he must have Expended no more than 20 Millions, and yet there was a Debt owing of 5 Millions still; and that he expects for carrying on a Vigorous War no less than 7 or 8 Millions more, and an encrease of 20 or 30000 Men, without which he can hope for no better Success than he hath had formerly; whereas it is our Opinion you neither can provide such Supplies, nor if he had them he would be able to effect greater Matters than he hath hitherto atchieved. I own there are many secret Sluces by which great Sums of your Money have passed, which whether they be publickly owned I know not: The Duke of *Savoy*, besides 100000 *l.* Prest-money, hath received 20, 30, 40, or 50000 *l. per* Month. The King of *Denmark* had a large Sum for the hiring the Troops under the Command of the Duke of *Wirtenburg*, thongh Prince *George* his Royal Brother hath had ill Usage by your Court. The Duk of *Hannouer*, and several other *German* Princes, proportionable Sums: Above 100000 *l.* spent upon the *Swiss-Cantons* and *Vaudois*, besides what we and the *Spanish Neatherlands* have received. So that your Money hath plentifully Circulated through the whole Confederacy.

How much hath been squandred away upon other Accounts I know not; but I presume upon giving liberty to due Informations you may easily learn. And I cannot think it needful to descend to many Particulars; but one Instance I cannot omit, a Master of one of the transport Ships related to me in presence of several, not as any Secret, but as the Case of many other such Masters; That upon his first Imployment into *Ireland*, he had 70 *l.* worth of Hay a board, and was retained

at 50 *l.* a Month, and ordered with his Hay to lye at one Port after another, till his Wages amounted to 1300 *l.* and when he related this he ſaid he had the like Lading on Board upon the other years pretended Deſcant, which he had kept on Bonrd till his Pay had run up to 750 *l.* He adds further, That a yearſince there was 500000 *l.* owing to tranſport Ships, which he durſt Undertake to prove, was more by 400000 *l.* than all their Cargo was worth.

I think you may caſt into the Scale of the laviſh Expence 300000 *l.* at leaſt ſquandered away upon your noiſed Deſcents, by which you mightily raiſed the Expectation of all *Europe*, to have ſeen ſome Maſter-piece of Stratagem, which by their Abortiveneſs have redounded to your eternal Diſgrace; and if your preſent Undertaking, with your Squadron under Capt. *Bombo*, with his Well-boats and Bomb Veſſels, ſhoul erd in an empty Burſt, you will forfeit for ever your Reputation in Policy, and Conduct.

I remember, when I was with you, I heard ſeveral of your Character liberally cenſuring ſome of theſe Matters, as alſo bitterly inveighing againſt the Numbers of civil and military Officers and Pentioners in the Houſe; for whom it was reported that 150000 *l.* was lodged, not to be touched for otber Uſes, that it might be ready for Diſtribution agoinſt the Sitting of the Houſe. Beſides the quarterly Payments of 30000 *l.* which I doubt not but our States, if required, would willingly pay a ſhare of, rather than ſuch uſeful Perſons ſhould want their Wages; for the more Liberal ſuch Men are of the publick Money, the more comes to ours and all the Confederates Treaſury, as well as yours. And I think you may eaſily judge in whom this *Aurum Potabile* works moſt effectually; for they will ſeem, at the firſt Sitting, as forward as any to redreſs publick Grievances, yea, to enquire into ſome Miſcarriages, and ſeem unwilling that any Money ſhould be given till publick Accounts be ſtated; but when they have gotten the Reputation of Patriots by that Art, they then know when to follow their File-leaders, to ſuperſede all further Enquiries, by diverting the Houſe by ſome new Matters, or ſuggeſting Dangers from abroad, or Plots at home, and then watching an Opportunity when their Party is ſtrongeſt in the Houſe, they gain ſome fundamental Vote for a Supply, and as ſoon as that is obtained, they purſue that Quarry only, letting all other publick Bills ſink, inſinuating that they had found no ſuch grounds of Complaints, or Miſmanagements, as at firſt appeared to them. This

Diſcovery

Diſcovery I gained by diſcourſe from a Member of our States General, who hath a great influence in your Councils, as well as ours; ſo that you may be confident that till you remove ſuch mercinary Members out of the Houſe, as Monopoliſts, and other obnoxious Perſons, as Betrayers of their publick Truſt, have been in other Parliaments, you will never be able to obtain a true Account how your Money hath been Expended, and what vaſt Arrears are owiug to the Fleet and Army, Providores of Stores, of Victuals, Ammunition, tranſport Ships, *&c.* It pleaſeth us infinitely that ſo great Sums are brought over hither for pay of the Army, and the Confederates in Specie, and the beſt Money, and I cannot learn that our Statholder brought any great Sum back in Silver, beſides 1500 *l.* in waſht and clipt Money. I am ſure you cannot forget how a very credible Perſon of Quality told you and me, That if a ſtrict Enquiry were made, there would appear that 1900000*l.* had been given by you ſince the Adminiſtration of our Statholder with you, for your Fleet more than ever had been paid to the Sea men, or expended upon it, and he believed ſuch like Defalcations would be found in what was given to the Army, and for other Occaſions, beſides placing more to Accounts than really had been paid: I ſhall long to know, whether in this Seſſions you make any Enquiry into ſuch Matters; for it is believed, if you trace theſe Matters up the Stream, (which if you do not, you will be notorious Breakers of the Truſt repoſed upon you) you will pinch ſome great Miniſters, who muſt either have an unuſual *Decian* Courage, to devote their Lives to excuſe ſome above them, which will be a rare Gallantry in this Age, or you will at the Fountain head find the ſource of Miſcarriages you are to Enquire after, of which we here talk more openly than you do. Having thus diſpatched the ſecond of your Enquiries in theſe ſeveral Particulars, I now proceed to the laſt.

It is more difficult I muſt confeſs to give an Anſwer to this than either of the former; becauſe the Conſultations of the Confederate Princes are kept, as they ought to be, very Secret; only I can tell you in the general, That neither the Emperor, King of *Spain*, Duke of *Bavaria*, or the other *German* Princes, are ſo devoted to our Statholder as formerly; ſince they ſee he can work no Miracles. And all the deference they have for him now, is becauſe he hath been ſo well credited, and befriended by you, as to be ſupplied with Men and Money hitherto, according to his deſire, without rendering any Account;

which,

which, though it be to the infinite damage of your selves, who reap no sort of Blessings, or Benefits thereby, yet is the only Cement which prevents the Crumbling of the Confederacy.

For I assure you we are sufficiently tired; out and exhausted by the War, and would be very thankful to such unengaged Princes as would undergo the Office of Mediators; for which purpose we have late Advice that the Emperor hath sent to the Pope, to acquaint him, that he is not averse to Peace, provided he may have honourable Terms and for that purpose desires a Copy of the *French* King's Terms. The King of *Poland* likewise hath represented his Inability to sustain the Losses his Subjects receive by incursions and pressures of the Tartars: What Applications have been made by the Emperor to the Northern Crowns, and the Willingness of the *French* King to accept of their Mediation is much discoursed of; and how instant the Pope, the State of *Venice*, and the *Italian* Princes, are to persuade the Duke of *Savoy* to accept of the Overtures of the King of *France*, you cannot be ignorant, though it may be it is concealed from you into what straits the Duke is reduced; for we have it from sure hands, That in the late Battle, after a perfect numbring of the Duke's Souldiers slain, they amounted to 9000 and 600 Men, and that 3000 Prisoners were taken, and 117 Standards and Colours, and besides all the Cannon and Baggage, a vast number of Bombs and Carcasses were taken, with which the Duke intended to Bombard *Pignerol*. That since this Victory the whole Army under Marshal *Catinal* hath quartered in that rich Country, and hath drawn such vast Provisions from thence, that he hath stored *Pignerol* for two years, shall do the like for *Cazal*, besides putting so large a Garrison into it, as shall enable them to make Excursions all this Winter; and the *French* King hath sent a Message to the *Italian* Princes, that if they admit any of the *Germans* to quarter in their Territories, he will send his Troops among them, otherwise he will inviolably preserve the Peace of *Italy*; and our very last Advices are, that the Duke hath at last sent to the Duke of *Orleance* to medeate a Peace, upon which the *French* King dispatched a Courier with his Answer in five hours; and if a Peace be once made in that Quarter, it will be a great step towards the like with the Emperor.

You must, in the next place, consider the *French* King is so much above his Work, that he may continue the Wars many years yet longer, without impoverishing his Subjects in 12 years more, as much as

ours

ours and yours have been in theſe Four or Five years laſt; for that he maintains a great part of his Troops, by Quarterings, Forrage, and Contributions out of the Confederate Countries, and his Sea Force by Prizes, while his own Kingdom enjoys a profound Tranquility, as if no War was in their Borders. And all the World knows with what eaſe out of his large and populous Dominions he can raiſe what Men he pleaſeth by Warrants only from Lieutenants of Provinces, to the reſpective Cities and Towns, who at a day prefixed bring to the Rendevouz, a double Number of Men, out of which the Officers pick out the Number needed of the ableſt Men, without beat of Drum, or allowing his Officers ſo much *per* Head, as the Confederates are forced to advance for theirs. And his Subjects have ſuch a perfect Love to him, even to a Veneration, and ſuch a Senſe of the Honour which redounds to the *French* Nation by his glorious Succeſſes, that with great Alacrity they ſubmit to what-ever he requires; beſides that, all Undertakings, after mature Conſultations, are ordered by himſelf ſolely, ſo that his Purpoſes and Determinations are never betrayed, or embarraſſed, or retarded, by ſtaying for the Conſent of others, as the Confederates are yearly compelled to ſubmit to; and then he hath 400000 ſtout and reſolute Men, under the moſt experienced Commanders of any Age, to put all his Commands in Execution; and his Fund of Money is inexhauſtable, for that in times of Peace the whole Revenue of his Kingdom paſſeth through his Exchequer once in Five or Six years, ſome affirm it in Four. And if he chance ever to be put to a Streight, a few of his rich Allies will ſupply him.

Thus, Sir, I have given you not only my own Judgment, but that of very juditious Men I have converſed with: Yet, leaſt my Letter ſhould be too long, I have omitted ſeveral things I had to ſay; which, if this be of any uſe to you, may be ſupplied in my next; and with profound Reſpects I remain,

SIR, Yours.

POSTSCRIPT.

I Might have given a doleful Account of the Hardſhips your Country-men have ſuffered here. I ſuppoſe your Officers, who return, will acquaint you that they have ſpent all their pay here, and were forced to ſell what they could raiſe Money upon, to diſcharge their Quarters, and come to you Penny leſs: But you muſt likewiſe know, that after the Battle of *Landen*, all the Hoſpitals were emptied of the Sick and Wounded, to make room for the great Numbers wounded in that Battle, and thoſe who were turned out had nothing given them to provide for themſelves with; even ſuch as had leave to return for *England* had but 10*s.* an Head allowed, of which the Officers often deducted half. And after ſome while, the new Comers into the Hoſpitals at *Louaine*, *Gant*, *Bruſſels*, *&c.* were diſlodged upon pretence that there was no Money either for Meat or Medicines; upon which ſevere Uſage, I am credibly informed, more than 1300 Men periſhed; and ſuch as got Paſports for *England* were ſtripped of their Soldiers Coats, and ſent to beg or ſteal, and dye unpitied or unrelieved, at *Harwich* or other Towns they come to, unleſs ſome more generous Officer take care to adminiſter ſome Relief. It would pity ones heart to obſerve how little regard their Officers have to ſuch who have been either Wounded or Sick; and you may be ſure if your own Officers take no care of them, thoſe of our Country, and the *Flemings*, take much leſs; for it is all our ſtudy to ſpung all their Pay from them, and when they have got that they are unconcerned, if they lie dead in the Barracks or High-ways.

FINIS.